

Amendments to the Claims

Claims 1-22 (cancelled).

23. (original) A method of making a ceramic arc tube comprising the steps of:

- (a) fixing a transient assembly button around a capillary tube to form an end cap;
- (b) inserting the end cap into an open end of a hollow arc tube body until the transient assembly button contacts an edge of the open end;
- (c) heating the assembly to form a mechanical seal between the capillary tube and the open end of the hollow body;
- (d) removing the transient assembly button without damaging the assembly; and
- (e) sintering the assembly to form the ceramic arc tube.

24. (original) The method of claim 23 wherein the transient assembly button is fixed to the capillary tube by heating at or below about 1350°C.

25. (original) The method of claim 23 wherein the assembly is heated at or below about 1350°C to form the mechanical seal.

26. (original) The method of claim 23 wherein the hollow body in step (b) has two opposed open ends having end caps inserted therein and in step (c) the capillary tube of each end cap is sealed simultaneously to the respective open end.

27. (original) The method of claim 25 wherein the assembly is sintered at a temperature above about 1800°C in a hydrogen-containing atmosphere.

28. (original) A method of making a ceramic arc tube comprising the steps of:

- (a) fixing a transient assembly button and a sealing member around a capillary tube to form an end cap;
- (b) inserting the sealing member of end cap into an open end of a hollow arc tube body until the transient assembly button contacts an edge of the open end;

(c) heating the assembly to form a mechanical seal between the sealing member and the open end of the hollow body;

(d) removing the transient assembly button without damaging the assembly; and

(e) sintering the assembly to form the ceramic arc tube.

29. (original) The method of claim 28 wherein the transient assembly button is fixed to the capillary tube by heating at or below about 1350°C.

30. (original) The method of claim 29 wherein the assembly is heated at or below about 1350°C to form the mechanical seal.

31. (original) The method of claim 30 wherein the assembly is sintered at a temperature above about 1800°C in a hydrogen-containing atmosphere.

32. (original) The method of claim 23 wherein the capillary tube is subjected to a thermal pretreatment to densify the capillary tube prior to step a).

33. (original) The method of claim 28 wherein the capillary tube is subjected to a thermal pretreatment to densify the capillary tube prior to step a).